(b) The annual payment of customs duty varies. The amount paid to Messrs. Peirce Leslie & Co. for four years from 1097 to 1100 is given below. The figures include not only customs duty but all incidental charges till delivery at the respective stations.

1097	Rs.	12,927—5—0
1098		19,416—3—3
1099		10,921—6—9
1100		19,361—5—0

(c) Tinctures are supplied partly by import of concentrated tinctures from Messrs. Burgoyne Burbidges & Co. and partly from Dr. Bose's Laboratories, Calcutta.

Excluding tinctures and spirituous preparations, the price of Messrs. Dadha & Co. compares favourably with that of Messrs. Ferris & Co., Ltd.

The discharge of a female in-patient from the General Hospital.

53. Dr. A R. Menon :—Will the Government be pleased to state, if it is true that a female patient was discharged from the Ernakulam General Hospital at 11 p. m. on 15th Medam 1101; if so, why?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—No; but a female patient was allowed to be removed from the hospital on that night by her mother.

Dr. A. R. Menon:—I am not satisfied with the answer, Sir. Will you kindly explain what the circumstance is?

President.—I shall read the report of the Civil Surgeon on the incident.

" With reference to your memo, dated 19th July 1926, R. O. C. No. 2879/01, I have the honour to report that on the night in question, I paid a visit to the Hospital, as occasionally I do, when I found lots of people crowded in the female wards, some seated on the patients' beds and others on the floor, chatting loudly and disturbing the patients. These were either the patients' attendants or their relatives. In the interest of the sick, I thought it undesirable to allow so many people to crowd about the wards at night, and I told them to clear away. I asked those on duty that night not to allow any one to stand by the side of the patients, unless the patient was so ill that she could not but have an attendant by her side. A woman, the mother of a patient in convalescence stage after fever, objected in strong language to leaving her patient in the Hospital, and said she would take the patient away in that case. I said I had no objection, and I was bound to see ' behaviour ' in the Hospital up. Accordingly, she took her patient away with my sanction."

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Dr. A R. Menon.—The General Hospital at Ernakulam is a Government institution, and rules are to be strictly observed.

President.—These are all observations. I think you may not be justified in stating them.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Is it a rule in the General Hospital to allow the friends and relations of patients to sit and chat with each other at night?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.— That is not the rule.

Dr. A. R. Menon —How is it that they gotinto the General Hospital, then, if it is not a rule?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.— They came in, when they took the food to the patients, and they did not go away.

President.—Should we not see that those people are not allowed to stay at night?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—That seems to be a difficult problem indeed. In a few cases, friends and relations of patients are allowed to be in the Hospital at night. Sometimes, friends and relations of patients get into the Hospital at night unawares. The watchman drives them away. Even then, they somehow or other get in.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Is it not a violation of the rules that isitors should be admitted into the Hospital at night?

President.—Is it not a rule that friends and relations of patients should not be allowed to stay in the Hospital at night?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—It is no rule. In exceptional cases, they are allowed to stay in the Hospital at night.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—The rule is that no visitor should be allowed to come into the Hospital at night; and what is the reason for the violation of this rule?

President.—Who are the persons that got into the Hospital during this particular night? Do you know anything personally about this case? Were they the relations and friends of the patient?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—They were the relations or friends of the patients. They were prohibited from entering the Hospital at night. They came in the evening and stealthily got in. The ward attendants drove them out, and they came back again. There was a great deal of trouble.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Is this answer given to a Member of the Council in all seriousness? Have you violated the rule?

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That is my question. If so, who is responsible for the violation of that rule?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.— In this particular case, the mother of the patient was permitted to sit with the patient.

President.—We have got certain rules such as nobody should commit theft, nobody should commit murder, and so on. But laws are no protection. In this particular case, the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer allowed the mother to stay in the Hospital. The ward attendants drove away unnecessary visitors. In spite of that, people entered, and the rules were violated.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—In this case a woman was sent away from the Hospital at 11 o'clock at night, and we consider it a very serious charge.

President.—The mother of the patient said she would take her away.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—There must be a very grave reason to take away a sickly person at dead of night.

President.—The point emphasised upon is this. Suppose a woman comes and says she would take away her daughter at 11 o'clock at night, could we not say that we cannot discharge her at this untimely hour? Could we not also say "you come in the morning, and we will discharge the patient?" What would be the consequence?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—She said she would rather take the patient away at that untimely hour than leave her in the Hospital for the night and take her away in the next morning.

President.—The question is she should be allowed to take the patient away at that hour, if the patient is willing, and whether the rules allow this procedure?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Even patients who go much against our wish we have been forced to discharge.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Nobody has ever heard of such an incident, unless the patient is dead. What was the sort of treatment that she received that induced her to throw away the hospitality of a Government hospital? It must be a very serious kind of treatment.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—There is absolutely nothing of that sort in this case. She violated the discipline of the Hospital, and so she was discharged.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—They violated the Government rule in admitting persons to the Hospital at night, and, as a sort of punishment to the patient, sent her away at night.

President.—I suppose the facts were reported to you?

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Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Not immediately after.

President.—Personally, I have no information about this. Have you really enquired into all the facts of the case? Why should disturbance be created at night by allowing these people to get in and crowd into the female wards? Some stated that loud chatting was going on in the female wards. Why should all these things happen?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—You must understand the exact state of affairs Now, there are 16 beds for children. Each child has got a mother standing by day and night, and when she wants to go home, she puts somebody else in her place. In Madras and other places the nurses take charge of the patient. We have not an ample number of nurses here, and so the mothers are allowed to be there. This is the cause of the confusion. We have not sufficient attendants supplied by the Government to give adequate relief to the patients.

President.—Is it a rare occurrence or is it a usual occurrence?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—It is a usual occurrence.

President.—Is the state of things such that we cannot find an adequate remedy?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—It is impossible.

President.—Suppose you are strict, and you don't allow anybody to be in the Hospital at night so that the patients may not be disturbed.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I do not know what to do. There are 16 beds for children, and the mothers of the children attend them. If they must be driven away, who is to look after them?

President.—Do you allow outsiders to stay in the Hospital at night?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—No, Sir.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Enforce the regulation properly, and see that nobody stays in the Hospital at night.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—It is impracticable, unless there are more nurses and servants appointed by the Government.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Enforce the regulation and see that all obey your orders, Sir.

President.—Suppose there are 16 children, and there are 16 mothers to look after them, and they make noise. What are we to do?

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Dr. A. R. Menon.—A mother has no right to get into the Hospital, after she hands over her child to the authorities. When the child is handed over, the mother goes. I know what I am talking about, for I have seen hospitals with 300 beds. You are not to allow the mother to sit by the child.

President.—Then, of course, we will have to provide a sufficient number of nurses.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Exactly, that is the trouble.

President.—How many do you require to look after the patients ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—At the rate of 2 nurses for every 20 patients.

President.—How many patients are there ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—On an average 160.

President.—You want 16 nurses. How many have you now ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—We have got 5.

President.—Suppose you are given 11 more; will you stop all these things ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—We will require some more menial servants too. Two cannot attend on all the 20 patients at the same time I will place a list of the establishment of a hospital of the same standard as in Madras or Mysore or anywhere.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—When I used to say that it is not properly managed, all used to be angry with me. Now, you find that it is not managed properly. Did you take any action on this matter when you came to know of it ?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—A point of order, Sir the question time is over.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I ordered that they should be a little more rigorous in the matter of allowing friends and relations of patients to stay at night, and that they should see that no such things occur.

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